

Appendix G

"A HISTORY OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS
IN ONTARIO"

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I. 1780-1850: SCHOOLS OF NECESSITY

Ontario's first private schools were neither schools of class-based privilege nor schools of religious protest. They were, quite simply, schools of necessity. At a time in the late eighteenth century when the state was not involved in education, families who desired schooling for their children had of necessity to turn to the private sector. The most common arrangement saw an individual schoolmaster set up shop in his own home or in rented quarters, advertise his services and his rates, and begin instruction as soon as he had attracted enough children to make it a paying proposition. Sometimes the initiative for founding a school came from the parents themselves, occasionally from a religious or philanthropic group — but always from within the private sector.

These private-venture schools began dotting the Upper Canada (Ontario) countryside during the decade of the 1780s as Loyalist and other American immigrant groups took up land in the region. The year 1786, for example, saw schools begin in Kingston, Fredericksburgh, Ernestown and Sandwich. Each subsequent year saw additional ventures in these and other communities. Some of these early efforts were short-lived while others survived for a number of years before they too succumbed to changing demands. But for every school that closed, two or more opened to meet the needs of a growing population. By 1816, rudimentary private schooling had become widespread throughout the province. One traveller reported twenty-three schools in Norfolk County alone; another estimate placed the total number of schools in operation throughout the province at close to 200.¹

The first proposal to inject public money into school financing came from John Graves Simcoe, the first lieutenant governor of Upper Canada after the province was separated from Quebec in 1791. Simcoe advocated state subsidization of upper class schooling, while leaving the lower orders to fend for themselves. His attitude, supported by many in high positions both in Britain and the colony, favoured proper schooling for the select few — “the children of the principal people of the country” — who would eventually become the country's leaders. For the rest, Simcoe held that “such education as may be necessary for people in the lower degrees of life... may at present be provided for them by their connections and relations.” Simcoe firmly believed that the limited resources of the colony should be concentrated on the education of the few rather than spread thinly over the population as a whole.²

Simcoe's ideas were put into practice a decade later through the District Public (or Grammar) School Act of 1807, the first piece of educational legislation enacted by the parliament of Upper Canada. This act provided an annual grant of 100 pounds for one grammar school in each of the province's eight administrative districts. The act was criticized for its concentration on schooling for

gentlemen's sons while neglecting common schooling for the masses. The schools themselves were criticized for the Church of England tone that permeated their teaching staffs and governing boards. Consequently there emerged an opposing network of private “academies” — Bath, Newcastle and Grantham, for example — that provided an alternative form of middle-class schooling. Compared with the grammar schools, the academies were considered somewhat more democratic in tone, more pluralistic in religious orientation, and more practical in their aims. Thus were born Ontario's first private schools of protest.

The founding of Upper Canada College in 1829 was consistent with the elitist approach to public education first enunciated by Simcoe. This time the initiative came from another lieutenant governor, John Colborne, who argued that, despite the efforts of the state-aided district grammar schools, the colony desperately needed a first-class preparatory school before any thought could be given to establishing a university. So Upper Canada College (first called the Royal Grammar School) began with its Church of England headmaster, its British-trained staff, its classical curriculum, and its “birch-rod” style of discipline. According to Gossage, “Colborne was fulfilling a desire to re-create in Upper Canada all that he considered worthwhile in the British public school system.”³ All this was financed through generous public endowments and grants, leaving the usually wealthy parents with relatively modest tuition fees. What later became the pre-eminent independent school in Canada, the school that more than any other was regarded as the archetypal private school, thus began as the most lavishly state-aided school in the first half-century of Ontario's history.

Opponents of the government made Upper Canada College a target of attack, since it appeared to be an obvious creation of the colonial establishment or Family Compact, maintained for its own advantage by grants of government land and money. William Lyon Mackenzie attacked both the class and religious biases of the new institution. “The College,” he claimed, “was never intended for the people, that all classes may apply to the Fountain of Knowledge.” Though technically non-denominational, Upper Canada seemed to reflect and perpetuate Anglican interests, conducted “on a narrow, bigoted and sectarian plan.”⁴ Mackenzie thus bequeathed to later generations the two most frequently voiced criticisms of Ontario's private schools — their class bias and their religious orientation.

The Upper Canada legislature addressed the question of state aid for lower class education through the Common School Act of 1816. This provided an annual grant of up to twenty-five pounds to help pay a teacher's salary in each school where twenty or more pupils were in attendance, and where the doors were open for at least six months per year. Even those seemingly modest

requirements prevented the majority of common schools from qualifying for the grant. Further problems lay in the manner in which the local District Board of Education divided the grant among the schools in its district. Some boards simply divided the money equally among all qualified schools in the area; others favoured supporting a few superior schools at the expense of the many average efforts. Consequently the benefits of the 1816 legislation were spread unevenly throughout the province.

Government statistics show that the total number of grant-aided schools increased from 173 in 1817, to 1,721 in 1842, and to 3,059 in 1850. Unfortunately there is no precise means of measuring the number of non-aided schools during this period. But on the basis of extensive research, Gidney concluded that "there is a substantial amount of evidence" to suggest that until the early 1840s, "the non-aided schools were as numerous, or nearly so, as those that received government aid."⁵

Toronto provides good examples of the number and longevity of these non-aided schools. Between 1815 and 1846 city newspapers and directories contained notices for fifty-eight of them. As late as 1846 Egerton Ryerson claimed that only half the children attending day schools in the city were in government-aided schools. Of the large number of non-aided schools, some were quite exclusive, catering to the elite of the city and the province at large. Others served the sons and daughters of the middle classes, charging fees about the same as those of the district grammar schools. But, concluded Gidney, most were inexpensive, with fees comparable to those charged in the rural common schools.⁶

Other cities and towns boasted their own profusions of private-venture schools. Gidney discovered evidence of forty-eight such schools in Kingston between 1815 and 1846, with eleven showing continuity over three years or more. Podmore found that at mid-century, when optional rate assessment was introduced to support "free" state schools, the proportion of children attending private rather than state-aided schools varied from 11 to 51 per cent of the urban population, reaching 43 per cent in Hamilton, 44 in Kingston and 51.5 in Dundas.⁷

Yet by the middle third of the nineteenth century voluntarist and private approaches to schooling came under sharp attack from a new generation of public school promoters. Educational reformers like Egerton Ryerson in Upper Canada, and his counterparts elsewhere in North America and Western Europe, began emphasizing public rather than private educational aims. They argued that the urbanizing and industrializing society of the day needed a more highly schooled citizenry in order to advance the public good. Schools should exist to serve the political, economic and social needs of the state and the society. These school promoters called for increased public financing which was inevitably accompanied by increased state control.

Within less than a generation, both the common schools and the grammar schools of Upper Canada were brought under full public control. Legislation of 1850 allowed local municipalities to finance common schools through a property assessment. Sufficient funds could now be raised to assist all common schools in the community, thus ending the distinction between grant-aided and non-aided schools. Within two decades, 90 per cent of the province's municipalities had chosen this approach; consequently when such assessment was made compulsory in 1871 there were no great storms of localist protest. To underline the new order, the 1871 act changed the name from "common" to "public" school. At the same time, the old grammar schools were also brought under full public financing and control as high schools and collegiate institutes.

"The Ontario school system that took shape in the middle decades of the nineteenth century," concluded Gidney, "first undermined and then destroyed the traditional character of Upper Canadian educational provision." "With larger government grants and an improved administrative system, the number of non-aided schools that catered to the lower and middle classes declined sharply as these schools transformed themselves into grant-aided institutions. With public schools now readily available and accessible, the private school as a school of necessity waned and then died.

II. 1850-1900: SCHOOLS OF PRIVILEGE

Department of Education statistics for 1871 showed 285 private schools in Ontario, with a total enrolment of 6,511 pupils. Four years later (the last year private school figures were given in the annual report) the number of schools had risen to 297 and the total enrolment to 7,982. Fragmentary evidence for the remainder of the nineteenth century suggests a steady decline in the actual number of private schools, with the smaller, weaker ones succumbing as they lost clientele to the free public schools. Total private school enrolment showed a modest growth, as the stronger schools established themselves in the educational marketplace. Given the even greater expansion of the public school sector, however, the actual share of the total enrolment held by the private schools slowly fell.

As the umbrella of public education spread over Ontario, the very term "private schooling" began to take on a new meaning. No longer did it imply schools of necessity in a pre-1840 sense, or even a broad spectrum of alternatives as was the case from the 1840s through the 1860s. By the 1880s the term "private schooling" had assumed elitist connotations. This second half of the nineteenth century saw the founding of many of the great private boarding schools of Ontario, schools that joined Upper Canada College as the elite among the independent schools.

The founders of these late nineteenth century private schools have been described by Purdy as being "stimulated by a variety of motives, not all of which were concerned with the academic needs of the province's youth." Religious idealism, sentimental attachment to old English institutions, patriotic and imperialistic notions, the desire to create a leadership class imbued with the ideas of Christian service — all were factors which led to the founding of these boarding schools. In turn, they were patronized by parents who sought for their children denominational education, superior or more specialized teaching, or vaguely defined social advantages — in short, "advantages that the emerging state schools did not or could not offer."

Religious initiatives led to the founding of many of these schools. Roman Catholic groups launched St. Michael's College School (Toronto 1852), Assumption College School (Windsor 1857), Ursuline College (Chatham 1860) and Loretto Academy (Niagara Falls 1861). Initiatives from high Anglican groups within the Church of England led to Trinity College School (Weston 1862, then Port Hope 1868) and Bishop Strachan School (Toronto 1867). In response, the evangelical or low church Anglicans founded Bishop Ridley College (St. Catharines 1889) and Havergal College (Toronto 1894). Meanwhile the various non-Conformist denominations were also active: the Methodists with Albert College (Belleville 1857), Ontario Ladies' College (Whitby 1874) and Alma College (St. Thomas 1877); the Baptists

with the Canadian Literary Institute (Woodstock 1857) and Moulton Ladies' College (Toronto 1888).

These schools were products of three very different traditions in the history of Canadian education. Schools like St. Michael's College stood squarely in the age-old Catholic tradition, which held that only church-control could guarantee proper emphasis on the fundamental Christian and Catholic purposes of schooling. Institutions like Trinity and Bishop Strachan were clearly in the Anglican tradition, which saw a close relationship between church and state; here the twin goals of loyalty to the crown and belief in Church of England doctrine were inseparable. Finally, there was the dissenting tradition, found in the Methodist and Baptist schools, and in the much older Pickering College of the Quakers, which stressed voluntarism in church-state educational relations.

In more practical terms, this plethora of denominational schools might be viewed as a manifestation more of democratic protest than of social elitism. Religious feelings and interdenominational rivalries permeated Ontario life during the nineteenth century. Some Protestants charged that the Roman Catholic Church had too much influence on the public school system; many Catholics thought just the opposite. Some denominations seemed to be declaring their opposition to what they perceived as the watered-down Christianity or outright secularism of the emerging public system; others were in part protesting against the Anglican exclusivity that still lingered in Ontario's upper class and official circles.

Each of the new denominational private schools was an attempt to provide sectarian-based instruction to the sons or daughters of its own flock. These schools, most of them residential in nature, provided a sheltered home-away-from-home, permeated by Christian morality, offering a kind of finishing-school gloss to youngsters who would not proceed to university, and, of course, serving as unofficial recruiting agencies for clerical and religious vocations.

Yet as the years progressed, the religious-protest feature of most of these schools took second place to their social-elitist function. While there were notable exceptions like Pickering College and many of the Catholic schools, the majority of the strong and enduring private schools of late nineteenth century Ontario opted for the elitist English model of Upper Canada College.

The result was a sustained attempt to import certain features of the English boarding school to the Ontario frontier: clerical headmasters; staffs with high proportions of British-trained teachers; strong emphases on sports and games accompanying the highly academic work of the classroom. All the schools advertised a well-rounded education within a Christian framework, hinting at leadership training for young men and social

refinement for young ladies. All charged fees that seemed relatively higher each year, as the public high schools gradually lowered and eventually abolished their more modest charges. By the end of the nineteenth century the private schools had become almost exclusively the schools of the privileged.

The sexually-segregated private girls' schools of this period illustrate another aspect of this drift towards an old-world elitist model. The girls' schools of the mid-nineteenth century had been as much schools of necessity as schools of privilege, given the exclusion of female students (and female teachers) from the grammar schools. Not till the end of the 1860s were girls admitted on equal terms with boys to the classical course of the grammar schools, the course that was a prerequisite into the universities and the professions. Even after that many parents probably chose the private girls' schools out of a sincere belief that secondary level co-education was undesirable. By the end of the century, however, with girls in full attendance in the public high schools and storming the gates of the province's universities, the surviving private girls' schools, like their male counterparts, had become almost exclusively schools of privilege.

The stereotypical view of the Ontario girls' school comes from the later years of the nineteenth century. With their sheltered, usually residential environments, and a curriculum strong on languages and the arts, they offered social and moral refinements far beyond the range of the public high schools. In addition, there was the unspoken expectation of upward social mobility. Phillips has condemned these schools in most caustic terms:

Small wonder that women of position or determination welcomed a type of education which would enable their daughters to escape the lot of ordinary women. Schools for young ladies carried their charges to the brink of matrimony with the attractions of unquestionable virtue, of an ingenuous manner complemented by adroit manners, and of purely social and ornamental accomplishments, with the further insurance against hard work of a seemingly delicate constitution.¹⁰

At the apex of Ontario's nineteenth century private school network stood Upper Canada College. High school inspector J.A. McLellan (a UCC old boy) was particularly complimentary in his evaluation of the school in 1881. If sufficient funding were forthcoming to permit the employment of first-rate masters, declared McLellan,

"higher results in national education will be won, with profounder influences upon the moral, intellectual and industrial life of our community." Education minister George Ross, in laying the cornerstone for Upper Canada's new campus in 1891, praised the institution lavishly and virtually dedicated himself to its preservation. "Anything wrong that should happen to such a college, with such a career," declared Ross, "would be nothing short of calamity."¹¹

Yet Upper Canada faced an increasing barrage of criticism during the latter years of the nineteenth century. "Now that our numerous collegiate institutes afford every facility for a first-class secondary education," observed Charles Mulvaney in 1884, "it is thought by many that Upper Canada has survived its usefulness." Financially pinched high schools looked with envy at the College's generous state endowment and demanded a more equitable division of the available money. Reform politicians and labour groups regarded it — with good reason — as a privileged institution, designed for and patronized by the wealthier families of the province. "In these democratic times, little is venerated," complained G. Mercer Adam in his 1893 official history of UCC, published just before the links between the school and the government were finally severed.¹²

Adam was articulating what seemed plainly evident to all private schools by the end of the nineteenth century — a very minor role in the provincial scheme of education. With the steady improvement of public high schools and the democratic tendencies of North America, Ontario's private schools could never fill the role that Eton, Rugby and Harrow had filled in England. These British transplants, declared Richard Harcourt, Ross's successor as education minister in 1899, were "of doubtful relevance for Ontario," where social values called for free secondary education for all.¹³

Purdy's later assessment of these schools reinforces Harcourt's contemporary views. Purdy summed up their influence this way:

If the aim of Ontario boarding school founders in the nineteenth century was to produce leaders for the province and the nation and to infuse Canadian life with certain particular values and attitudes, then the attempt must be deemed a failure. The socio-economic milieu of the new environment rejected this transplant . . . These schools, by and large, were isolated, both geographically and socially, from the main trends of development in nineteenth century Ontario.¹⁴

III. 1900-1960: SCHOOLS OF INNOVATION

By the end of the nineteenth century, independent entrepreneurs began to replace religious denominations as the initiators of new private schools. In a manner somewhat reminiscent of the earliest period in Upper Canada, these latest private schools usually began as one-man or one-woman institutions, shaped and dominated by their founders. These various founder-teachers were dissatisfied with the quality of available public education in Ontario. They believed that unfilled moral and academic and vocational needs of youngsters could best be met in the private domain. A number of these newer independent ventures were quite experimental, challenging the older private schools and the public school system itself to become more innovative.

The independent business college was one manifestation of the experimental private school that arose to challenge certain curricular and pedagogical assumptions of the public schools. The business colleges were extremely popular with both young men and women since they offered a type of training that the public high schools, due to their classical and grammar school origins, were slow to embrace; since they did not require any set level of educational attainment for admission; since they offered flexibility in terms of entry and exit points over a twelve-month school year; and since they were strictly vocational, avoiding all theoretical or abstract instruction. The heyday of the private business college lasted from about 1880 to 1920; after that the public school system expanded its offerings in business and commercial education to meet consumer demand.

In addition to these business colleges, there were a number of important private-venture academic schools founded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The strongest of these endured and eventually joined the ranks of the province's elite private schools. These included Ashbury College (Ottawa 1891), where founder-headmaster George Woolcombe remained on the scene for more than forty years; Hillfield College (Hamilton 1901), where founder John Collinson stayed for thirty years; St. Clement's School (Toronto 1901), where Effie Gordon Waugh, daughter of one of the founders, took over in 1917 and remained until 1960; Branksome Hall (Toronto 1903), where Edith MacGregor Read purchased the school's assets in 1910 and ran the school for nearly fifty years; and Appleby College (Oakville 1911), operated by founder-headmaster John Guest for more than twenty years.

These non-sectarian private schools differed from the previous generation of denominational schools in many ways beyond administrative control. These newer ventures included more urban-based day schools and fewer rural and small town boarding schools among their ranks. They seemed to speak to a new generation of rising urban professional and commercial families in early

twentieth century Ontario. Finally, they exhibited a little less old-country influence and more awareness of the North American environment in which they were located. At Appleby College, John Guest envisaged a school "founded in the tradition of the Old Land — rich in heritage and experience, but adaptable to the needs of a new country and the ways of Canadian boys."¹⁵

Stimulated by the influx of this new blood, many of Ontario's private schools became more innovative and experimental during these years. During the 1890s, for example, Woodstock College (the former Canadian Literary Institute) became the first school in the province to incorporate manual training (industrial arts) into its curriculum. At the same time Alma College in St. Thomas earned a reputation as one of Canada's leading art schools, winning an impressive array of prizes at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. After the turn of the century Ovenden School in Barrie became the first in the province to use aspects of the Montessori system. Then in 1910 the University of Toronto Schools was established as a laboratory school for that university's education faculty.

The province's public schools were frequent beneficiaries of these private school innovations. Certainly Woodstock College's successful manual training classes helped break down public skepticism and opposition, and led to that subject's inclusion in the curriculum of Ontario's public elementary schools. And the University of Toronto Schools exposed generations of teachers-in-training to new pedagogical practices.

But the most innovative Ontario private school during the first half of the twentieth century was undoubtedly Pickering College. Not by any means a new actor on the scene, Pickering had been founded by the Quakers in 1842 under the name of the Westlake Boarding School near Picton. After serving as a First World War military hospital, it reopened its doors in Newmarket in 1927 under the leadership of its progressive headmaster, Joseph McCulley. Pickering had always been more new world in orientation than most of Ontario's boarding schools. Now in the late 1920s and 1930s under McCulley and Taylor Statten, its director of character education, Pickering became the major Ontario laboratory for the testing of John Dewey's progressivist educational theories and practices.

Close harmony between democratic classroom and the larger democratic community were emphasized at Pickering during the McCulley years. A student-elected committee worked with the staff on matters of mutual interest and concern. Dormitory regulations were few, and sprung from the principle that "all activities depend on the convenience and health of the greatest number." Most important, a large proportion of the classroom work was "co-related to the local community" through field trips and practical work in the school's craft shop and farm.¹⁶

Sensing success in his own environment, McCulley was anxious to spread progressivist doctrines beyond Pickering. During the 1930s he was one of the mainstays behind the Toronto branch of the New Education Fellowship, a small but influential circle of progressive educators who promoted Dewey's ideas and helped persuade the Ontario Department of Education to implement progressivist curricular changes through the 1937 revised *Programme of Studies ... for the Public and Separate Schools*.¹⁷

Despite the contributions to public education made by a Pickering College or a University of Toronto Schools, however, the private schools as a group found themselves quite isolated from the Ontario educational mainstream on the eve of the Second World War. A good composite picture of the more elitist Protestant boys' schools is presented in *Private Schools of Canada*, edited by A.G.A. Stephen and published by Clarke, Irwin in 1938. This was a survey, seemingly designed for recruiting and money-raising purposes, of those boys' schools which were members of the Canadian Headmasters' Association. There were eight such schools in Ontario: Appleby, Ashbury, Hillfield, Ridley, St. Andrews, Trinity, Upper Canada, and the renegade Pickering.

This survey reported on such practical details as annual fees (\$195 to \$270 for day pupils, \$675 to \$750 for boarders) and staff qualifications (72 per cent now held Canadian university degrees). Each school proclaimed its devotion to the twin goals of academic excellence and character development through its close supervision of pupils both inside and outside of class. All this was co-ordinated by headmasters of impeccable character, each answering to a board of governors drawn almost exclusively from fine old Ontario WASP families.

Yet by the time of this publication, most of the traditional Ontario private schools had sunk into a kind of lethargy. Some found their socio-economic exclusivity now appealed to an ever declining constituency in a more egalitarian twentieth-century Canada. Others discovered that their religious emphases were less desired in an increasingly secular society. Many of the sexually segregated all-girls' and all-boys' schools lost potential pupils to the co-educational public school sector. Despite periodic curriculum innovations, the private schools could not hope to offer the more expensive technical and commercial education programs that drew increasing enrolments in the public high schools. What future awaited these schools in the years following the end of the Depression and the Second World War?

Private schools were certainly not important to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, chaired by Justice J.A. Hope. The Hope Commission devoted just nine of the 933 pages of its 1950 report to private schools. It identified 134 "approved" private schools in the province, schools that were duly registered with and authorized to offer instruction by the department of education. These schools in 1947-48 enrolled approximately 4,700 pupils in the elementary grades (about one per cent of the provincial total) and 13,500 in the secondary grade (about 10 per cent of the total). Some dated from the first half of the nineteenth century, whereas many had been founded within the previous two or three decades. But they were to remain in the private domain; the Hope Commission recommended their continued exclusion from local tax monies and provincial grants.

A distinctive pessimistic tone characterized published accounts of private schools during the 1950s, as their enrolment slipped below two per cent of the provincial total. Such *Financial Post* articles as "Will Costs Close Canada's Private Schools?" (July 12, 1952) and "There's a Crisis in These Canadian School Yards" (January 21, 1956) conveyed an impression of expenses rising faster than revenues, higher tuition fees producing an even more restricted clientele and below-capacity enrolments, and schools searching desperately for alternative sources of funds.

It is tempting to conclude that the Ontario private school was on its way out by 1960. Its old-world WASP ethos seemed out of place in an increasingly multicultural Ontario. How quaint, how archaic, how irrelevant were these private schools with their chapel services and playing fields, their masters and house systems, their Old Boys' and Old Girls' associations, their careful delineation of the separate roles that society wanted for men and women. They were cloistered, isolated and conservative, and they presented to the rest of the world a smug and self-congratulatory, snobbish and exclusive attitude.

The general public seemed more indifferent than openly hostile, but it was almost a damning kind of indifference. "In the image of middle-class equality that Canadians have of their society," wrote sociologist John Porter, "the private school does not belong. It is something associated with the aristocratic societies of Europe and is rarely thought of as being a significant feature of Canadian life."¹⁸

IV. 1960-1980: SCHOOLS OF PROTEST

The lethargy, pessimism and apparent declining significance of private schooling in mid-twentieth century Ontario, proved to be but a passing phase. The years following 1960 witnessed both a quantitative growth and an increasing diversity within the province's private school sector not seen since the early years of the nineteenth century.

From the 134 private schools identified by the Hope Commission in 1947-48, the number rose to 242 in 1969-70, 335 in 1977-79, and 551 by 1984. Ministry of Education statistics for September 1983 showed 83,463 pupils attending private schools. This was almost four times the 1960 total, and more significantly, represented a doubling in the proportion of pupils attending private schools from approximately two per cent to four per cent of the provincial total. The 1983 figures also showed a more even distribution across the total grade structure than ever before, with 35,998 in elementary grades and 47,645 in secondary grades. Religious and philosophic diversity was also more evident than in previous periods, with 31,881 pupils in Roman Catholic private schools, 9,383 in schools belonging to the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, 7,599 in Jewish schools, 4,923 in Anglican schools, 2,612 in Mennonite schools, 8,700 in schools of other religious denominations, and 18,545 in non-sectarian private schools.

Roman Catholic schools comprised the largest component with 37 per cent of Ontario's private school enrolment. Since public financing for Catholic separate schools ended at Grade 10, private financing was mobilized to ensure the continuation of a Christian and Catholic atmosphere through the final three years of high school. The result was the twentieth century private Catholic high school, usually located in a larger urban centre, where a sizeable Catholic population and a well-established separate school system could provide enough recruits for its Grade 11 beginning. Early examples included Cathedral High School (Hamilton 1912) and Notre Dame College School (Welland 1947) which soon joined ranks with much older Catholic schools founded in the nineteenth century.

The foremost champion of the Catholic day high school was James Cardinal McGuigan, Archbishop of Toronto. In 1944 McGuigan launched a personal campaign to raise \$1,000,000 for Catholic secondary schools within his diocese. "This is no mere collection of funds," he announced. "It is a crusade in Catholic co-operation for our beloved youth." The new schools would be staffed "by the finest teachers" and would be "Catholic to the fibre of their hearts."¹⁹ McGuigan's own enthusiasm and zeal guaranteed that the objective would be achieved. By the late 1940s the money was in place and the planning underway to meet the challenge of post-war Catholic immigration into Metropolitan Toronto.

Other factors assisted the spread of Catholic high schools into less urbanized regions of the

province during the 1970s. First came the creation of county-sized boards of education. Now separate schools systems throughout Ontario had larger attendance areas and population bases upon which to construct Grades 9 and 10 classes that eventually fed into private Grades 11-13. Second, came the response to Premier William Davis' 1971 decision not to extend public funding to Catholic schools beyond Grade 10. Initial Catholic disappointment was soon channelled into positive directions. Indeed, it proved an important spur to increase fund-raising efforts in the private sector. In Dufferin-Peel, for example, the number of Catholic high schools increased from zero to nine in a ten-year period.

By the early 1970s, Jewish schools had joined Catholic schools as important players on Ontario's private school stage. The first Jewish venture into full-time alternative education had been the Associated Hebrew Day School (Toronto 1942), where the regular Ontario curriculum was supplemented with studies in Judaic religion and culture, and with Hebrew as a living language. By 1983-84 enrolment had climbed to 2,885, making it the largest Jewish day school in the world. Jewish schools increased rapidly throughout Ontario in the 1960s and 1970s to accommodate Orthodox, Conservative and Reform diversity within the community. By September 1983 there were ten Jewish elementary schools and four secondary schools within Metropolitan Toronto, plus schools in Ottawa, Hamilton, London and Windsor for a total provincial enrolment of 7,599.

The Jewish move into the private sector was not a protest against the pedagogic quality of the public schools, but rather a move against the perceived submergence of Jewish identity into a process of homogenization that Ontario's post-war schools seemed to represent. The public school system offered few opportunities for transmitting a linguistic and cultural heritage so important to this minority. It did not "provide to them the ambit and scope of the education which they as parents deem necessary for the beneficial development of their children."²⁰ Driven by a desire to rebuild a new Jewish world out of the ashes of the Holocaust, replenished by successive waves of Jewish immigration, and assisted by funds raised through the United Jewish Appeal, Ontario's Jewish communities were able to translate their protests into positive action.

While the Jewish population rejected the Christian hue of the public schools, and Catholics revolted against a perceived Protestant bias, more fundamentalist Christian groups charged that the public school system had become too secular. They wanted schooling for their children firmly grounded in evangelical and fundamentalist Christian values. Prominent among this segment of the population were the Christian Reformed or Dutch Reformed immigrants who began arriving from the Netherlands in substantial numbers in

the late 1940s and 1950s. Almost immediately their schools began appearing on the provincial scene: Eden Christian College (Niagara-on-the-Lake 1945), Jarvis District Christian School (1952). Here was an immigrant group whose communities and schools were not confined to major urban centres. By 1983 the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools enrolled 9,383 pupils, placing this group ahead of the Jews and behind the Catholics as the second largest component within the private school sector.

Inspired by the success of the Christian Alliance Schools, and driven by many of the same religious and family beliefs, other fundamentalist and evangelical Christian groups increased their private school involvement. The Seventh Day Adventist Church (Simcoe SDA School 1965), the Pentacostal Assembly, and some Baptist congregations established their own private schools. Some were church-initiated, others parent-initiated; many were linked with similar denominationally-based educational movements in the United States; all were premised on the belief that a Christian atmosphere should permeate all aspects of schooling. Such schools included a large proportion of the 8,700 pupils counted by the Ministry of Education as enrolled in "schools of other religious denominations" in September 1983.

The Old Order or Amish Mennonites also became active in the private school sector, as school consolidation swept through rural Ontario in the 1960s and 1970s. The Amish had throughout their history given high priority to passing on their cultural heritage through strong family bonds. As long as their children could attend small, community-influenced schools close to home, the Amish were willing to accept public schooling. But as soon as rural school consolidation brought busing of children out of the local community to larger, "mixed" schools, the Old Order Mennonites went private (Amish Parochial School #1, Millbank 1966). The local Amish groups often bought or rented the former one-room country schoolhouses that boards of education had declared redundant. By September 1983, some 2,612 children were enrolled in Mennonite private schools in Ontario.

In addition to the increased number of religious schools, the private school sector in post-1960 Ontario education also witnessed a rapid rise of schools founded for non-religious, purely educational or philosophic reasons. Ministry of Education figures indicated 18,545 pupils in these "non-sectarian" private schools by September 1983, some 22 per cent of the provincial private school total. Such schools began to proliferate in the mid-to-late-1960s, often as radical alternatives to the perceived inflexible, all-too-structured nature of the public school. In time the more radical or "free" schools moderated or died, and were replaced by more middle-of-the-road and eventually right-wing alternatives. Their growth challenged the public school sector to confront the concept of secular or philosophic

pluralism in addition to religious and cultural pluralism.

In September 1966, on a farm near Hillsburgh in the Caledon Hills, seventeen teenagers enrolled as the first students at Everdale Place, one of the earliest and most famous of the "free schools" that dotted the North American educational landscape in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As a product of the counter-culture of the period, Everdale prospered only as long as that alternative culture flowered. Yet it had more than a transitory impact on education and society. It spawned North America's foremost radical educational journal, *This Magazine is About Schools*, which survived as *This Magazine*, an important radical voice in Canadian journalism. Everdale also inspired other free schools to begin in Ontario — Superschool (Toronto 1968) and Odyssey House Community School (St. Catharines 1970). Finally, aspects of Everdale's radical philosophy can be found in *Living and Learning*, the 1969 free-wheeling report of the Hall-Dennis Committee that continued to influence the public schools through the next decade.²¹

Less radical than Everdale, but as innovative in their own ways, were dozens of additional new "non-sectarian" private schools — especially in the Metropolitan Toronto region. The decade of the 1960s, for example, gave birth to the Toronto Montessori School, Toronto Waldorf School, January (later Montcrest) School, and the Toronto French School. Montessori and Waldorf both belonged to international networks of private schools based on the educational philosophies of Maria Montessori and Rudolph Steiner, respectively. The January School was begun by parents who found that their children, with January birthdays, would have to wait until nearly seven years of age before learning how to read. The Toronto French School appealed to families who wished their children educated in a bilingual environment, at a time prior to French immersion classes in the public system.

Saturday Night magazine caught the spirit of the decade by headlining a May 1965 private school story: "If You Don't Like Your Child's School, Why Not Start Your Own?" It was soon evident that a whole new range of private schools had come into being — specializing in everything from religious education to language instruction to choral music to schools that emphasized roughing it out-of-doors. Diversity accelerated throughout the following decade of the 1970s. At Robert Land Academy in Wellandport, for example, students endured the strictest discipline in a quasi-militaristic environment, while at the Toronto French School students closely followed both France's baccalaureat program and the English "A" level stream.

At the same time the more traditionalist wing within the private school movement was also thriving. Here, too, new schools appeared on the Ontario scene with increasing frequency — St. George's College (Toronto 1960), Rosseau



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